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ABSTRACT

The third of three booklets developed by Project MAY (Mainstreaming Activities for Youth) is a personal guide for youth serving agency personnel involved in the planning, development, implementation, promotion, and evaluation of a program to mainstream handicapped youth. The document contains the following: a checklist on the staff/agency relationship, ideas for self preparation, a personal goal setting process that may be incorporated into the program objectives, a personal mainstreaming plan that may be incorporated into the program objectives, a list of communication ideas, and a personal learning log. (SBH)

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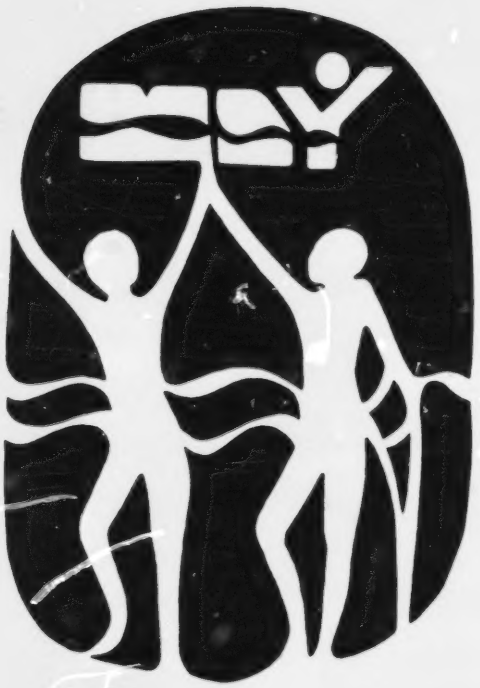
Mainstreaming

Book 3

Your Personal Guide



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All Program Areas

Volunteers and Professionals

This booklet was developed by Project Mainstreaming Activities for Youth (Project MAY), a collaborative effort of youth serving agencies to plan, develop, implement, promote, and evaluate the mainstreaming of handicapped youth into regular programs. The participating youth agencies are: The American National Red Cross Youth Service Programs; Boys' Clubs of America; Boy Scouts of America; Camp Fire, Inc.; Future Homemakers of America; Girls Clubs of America; Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.; National Board of YMCA's; National Board of YWCA; National 4-H Council; and National Jewish Welfare Board.

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Introduction

Welcome to the exciting world of Mainstreaming!

You are indeed a key person! You enjoy people...you have a lot of patience... you are innovative...you relate to and enjoy working with youth of all ages.

The program you are working with has made a commitment to mainstreaming. That commitment involves:

Learning Disabilities

--encouraging all youth, regardless of their personal special conditions, to choose the programs and activities in which they want to participate.

--recruiting and training leadership like yourself to work with different ability levels or different disabilities, to help youth with special needs participate.

Mentally Retarded

Quadriplegic

---adapting equipment and activities to include individuals with handicaps and doing this as creatively and as naturally as possible so as to enrich rather than dilute the program for all of the children.

Cerebral Palsy

Least Restrictive Alternative

Your job is special. The path you are about to travel requires many abilities. You will need to be flexible. You will need to take a lot of initiative. You will need to adapt and be creative. This job does not take unique skills. Be natural, be yourself, enjoy the people with whom you are working.

You are the link between the program's commitment and the participants in the aquatics program, at the camp, in the class, in the youth group, in the troop or on the team. Your smile, your frown, your question, your suggestion, your concern is all important.

Consider for a moment, some of the things which you think and feel when you first meet a person with a disability. You may ask yourself several questions: Should I act normally? Maybe I should speak more slowly? Should I help them out of the chair or hold the door for them? A feeling of frustration, concern, self-consciousness or empathy may influence your behavior. You may want to ask the person about their disability but are not sure if you should. These thoughts and feelings are part of each of us. It's our way of preparing to deal with new situations . . . it's OK!

You are not the special person's protector from everything that could happen to them. You are a friend. You are one of the important people in their life. You understand what we mean when we say: "Relate to the person not the handicap." You will be with them when new things are experienced, when things go well and when they don't. Relate, emphasize - don't dominate.

Do not walk before me -
I may not follow
Do not walk behind -
I may not lead
Just walk beside me and
be my friend.

In this booklet several things will help you in your job:

- a check list for the staff/agency relationship is suggested,
- ideas for self preparation
- a personal goal setting process that may be incorporated into the program objectives,
- a personal mainstreaming plan that may be incorporated into the program objectives,
- communication skills,
- your personal learning log,
- information on program participants including their ideas and attitudes on handicapped persons and previous experience in mainstreamed situations.

The Staff-Agency Partnership

a checklist

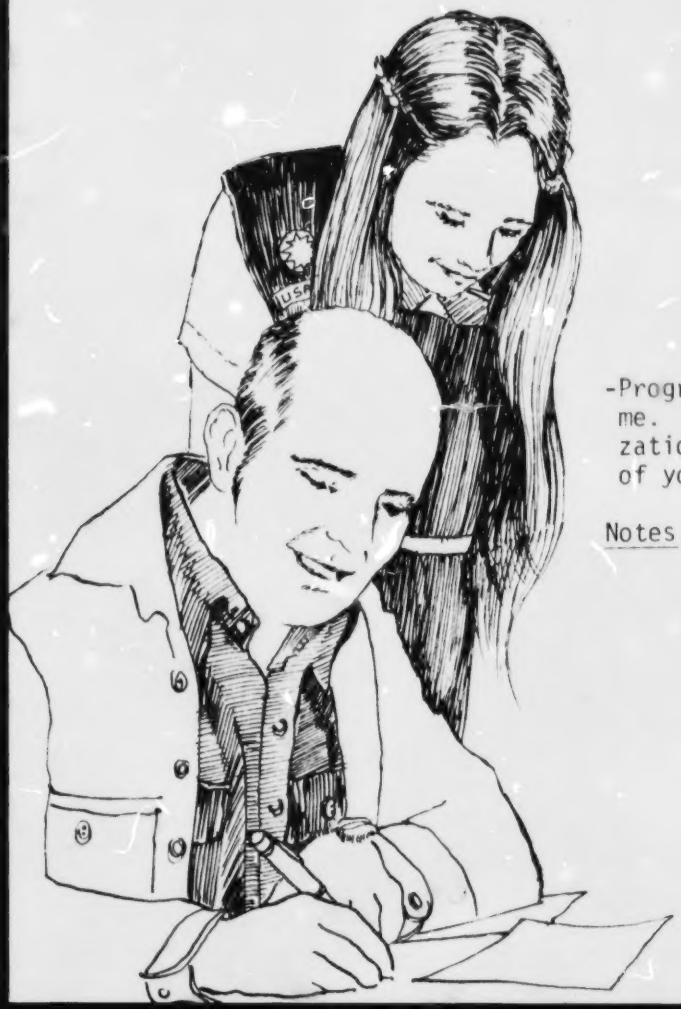
The following items are important in developing a sound partnership between the agency and the program staff whether it be volunteers or other staff leadership. Go through this list with the person or group you are working with and discuss each item.

-Background on organization and program, including history, current goals, extent of programs and services.

Notes:

-Description of the program with which you are to work. (What are all of the things that happen in this particular program - who, what, when, where, why and how?)

-Notes:



-Program's expectations of me. (What does the organization and program expect of you?

Notes:

Remember - People first!

-Information on abilities as well as disabilities of the special populations who are being mainstreamed into this program.

Notes:

-Training (When will you receive training in these areas:

- Working with children,
- Knowledge and skills of the activity of this program,
- Working with special populations
- Personal values - self-study
- Visitations to other organizations or schools offering programs for the people with whom you are going to work.

Notes:

-Fellowship and Partnership (What are the events where volunteers and staff get together with each other and how can we - volunteer and program staff - be partners, interdependent to each other, to get the job done?)

Notes:

-Special Resources (where do you get help with special problems or where do you refer people when you can't be helpful? Who are the people and written resources to which you can turn?)

Notes:

Self Preparation

One of the keys to working with people is getting to know the age group and particular population you'll be working with - knowing and getting comfortable with people. This is particularly important as a volunteer or staff person using mainstreaming to extend your program.

The following self-preparation activities may help in increasing your self-confidence and comfort level with the individuals with whom you will be working:

1) Observation - Spend time just observing the ability level and the activity of the program with which you will be working. If it's camping, visit the camp, observe the activities and visit with the staff and participants. If it's aquatics, observe the activity and visit with the volunteers/staff and participants. If you are working with youth clubs or youth sports, observe the program and visit with the staff and participants.

   Develop an understanding of how the participants play or use leisure time. Become involved in the activity, converse, learn about their special interests.

2) One-on-One - Try to spend some time with each participant of the age/ability level and the activity of the program with which you will be working. Talk with him or her about school, play, family, friends, etc. If possible, spend the same amount of time with each person with whom you will be working. Talk with him or her about the same things. Even if you are working in a group situation, it is helpful to know something about each individual in that group.

3) Library - An hour or two in your Public Library is another self-preparation tool that can have significant payoffs in terms of your own self-confidence. Ask the librarian for help - books, magazines about the handicapping condition, about the activities of the program, and about the growth and development patterns of the people with whom you'll be working.

Personal Goals/Objectives

Your personal goals/objectives for this experience are very important. Each one is unique. Only you know why you are giving your time and energy to this program. But it is vital that you spend a few minutes identifying your goals. Writing them down will help you become more aware of your feelings now and it will be a valuable reference point for self-reflection over the next few weeks or months of the program.

Note: Remember, this is for your own information only and will not be used for evaluation or placement within the program.

Why are you doing this?

What do you hope to learn about yourself? Others?

What do you feel you'll be contributing?

Take a few minutes to list on this page your own personal goals/objectives for this new experience.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Re-assess your personal goals and objectives at periodic intervals such as three months, six months or a year.

Personal Mainstreaming Plan

The Personal Mainstreaming Plan is a tool which is designed to help each person work with mainstreaming. The following process, when completed, will help the volunteer/staff and participant work together to clarify personal and program goals as well as initiate the opportunity for the individual to ask questions and share needs, thus becoming responsible for their own involvement in the program.

The following is a suggested outline for building a Personal Mainstreaming Plan which fits the individual's unique needs. You may choose to elaborate on this outline, but make sure you at least consider the basics which are listed here. Work with your organization as you develop your personal plan, as it may be a key part of their orientation and training. Remember that in many organizations this may be part of the organizational process.

Meeting The Program Participant

Activity	Planning Notes
Letter to the individual, parents, family and/or guardian, inviting them to meet with you.	
Meeting would include involving introduction to the program, goals and staff	
Tour of the facilities to be used	
Discussion/Interview (see next section)	
Invite participant to meet with you and a few other participants to visit and review the program	
Small group meeting including: .Introduction of each person to each other .Some mini-experience with the activity of the program .Group discussion of goals and expectations	

Assessing The Program Participant's Involvement

Activity	Planning Notes
Interview the participant, parents, family or guardian on previous youth program experience	
Have participant list strengths (as appropriate)	
Have participants list needs they feel they will have (as appropriate)	
Discuss with the participant the different levels of goals involved in the program, i.e., instructional/ recreational/social	
Have participant share his reasons for participating (this may not be relevant if this is a school or organizational program as it may be part of the planned activities for them)	
Agree to meet at pre-determined intervals during the program to review progress	

Reviewing The Program Schedule

Share the specific activities in the program which relate to the participant's goals	
Clarify times and special need requirements and agree upon how they will be taken care of	
Review orientation of program in general just before the kick-off session	

Evaluating The Participant's Involvement In The Program

Activity	Planning Notes
Check after each session with the participant to see how things are going.	
Check after each session with other staff working with the individual.	
Hold small group sessions at periodic intervals throughout the program to share progress notes.	
Design a checklist for each session where participants can score their own success, (include a sample of a checklist)	
Program rules and activities may need to be adapted or revised based on group discussion.	
Watch for teachable moments - be aware of the participant's readiness to move to new skills or activities.	
Reinforce each person's success with a comment or an opportunity to demonstrate to the group his or her newly acquired skill.	
Include the participant's evaluation or comments of the program itself.	
Special events during and at the end of program sessions are to share with family and friends of all participants in the program	

The key to the entire plan is to be flexible

and keep your eyes and ears open. Involve the individual in setting goals and assessing progress. Know what you're trying to accomplish and work with your participants to make the experience fun as well as meaningful to all concerned.

Communication Ideas

Communication skills and a belief in good communication will help each volunteer and staff person provide the kind of experience that makes successful programs. The three areas listed here are crucial to good communication with all of the people in your program.

Review the concepts, think about them, discuss them with others, try practicing them at home or with friends. Then use them as tools which will help you meet your goals in the youth activity program. Use a positive approach.

I. Speak for Yourself

1. Use "I" statements when you talk; kids want to know what you think.

2. Speak for yourself, not others; people are interested in your experiences and values more than in generalizations.

3. Say what you mean, and mean what you say. You have feelings and it's okay to share them. This is a real life experience and not a protected environment.

II. Listen to Others

1. Provide time and space to listen. Design it into your plans.

2. Take time to listen to the group as a whole, but also provide opportunities to listen to the participants on a one-to-one basis.

3. Listen with your eyes and heart as well as with your ears.

4. Share with the kids what you hear; they will let you know if you heard right.

5. Make opportunities for the participants to listen to each other and to you. Everyone likes to be listened to.

6. Take time to elicit information from other staff and parents, then listen carefully to what they say.

7. Be open and accepting of what you hear; it will encourage sharing and speaking for oneself.

III. Ask Thought Provoking Questions

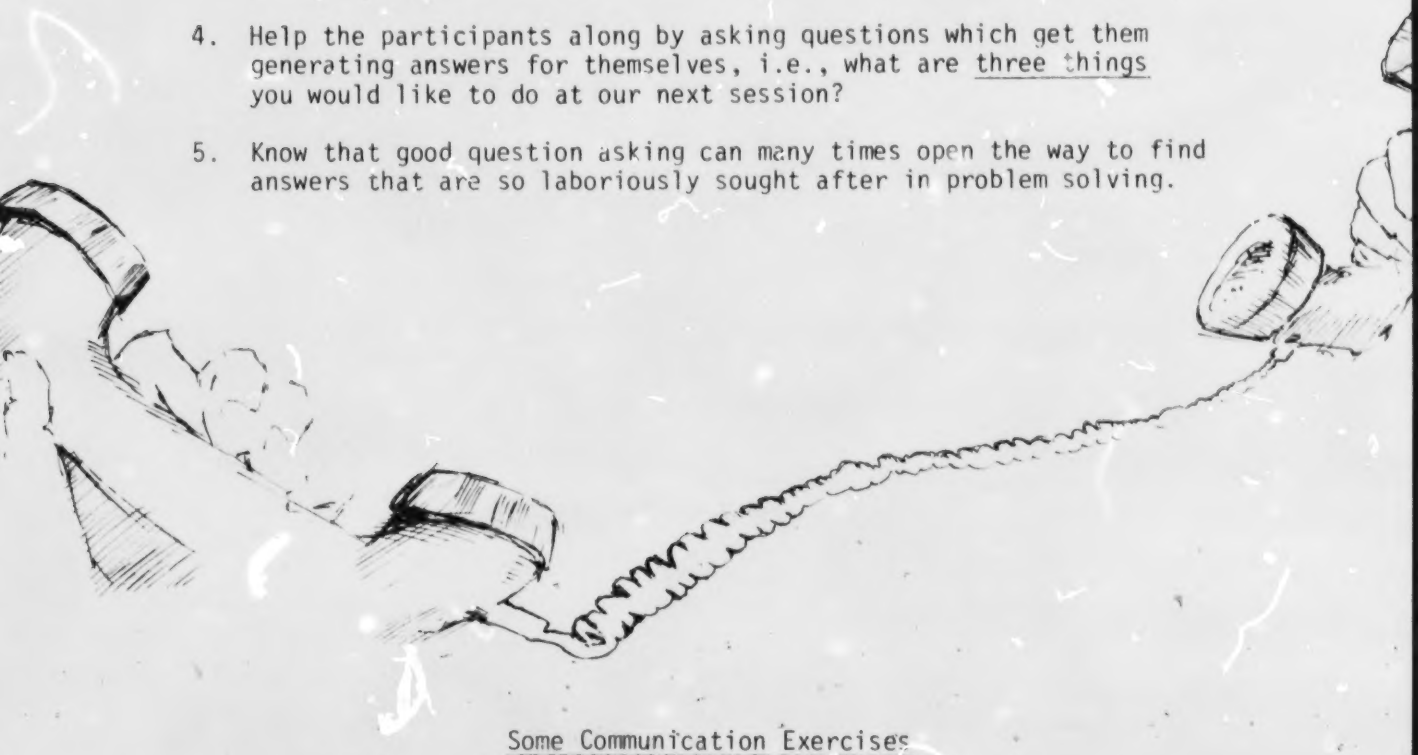
1. Use a variety of question asking methods.

2. Ask some yes/no questions which call for specific choices.

3. Ask some open-ended questions which give the participants a chance to respond in whatever direction they please. They will share what's on their minds as well as what's important to them at the time.

4. Help the participants along by asking questions which get them generating answers for themselves, i.e., what are three things you would like to do at our next session?

5. Know that good question asking can many times open the way to find answers that are so laboriously sought after in problem solving.



Some Communication Exercises

1. Write a sentence (i.e., how you feel about mainstreaming, identifying some special training which you think you need, offer to do something special, etc.) Now, remove as many words as you can from your sentence while still conveying your thought. Share your abbreviated sentence and check to see that it still communicates.

2. Think of a feeling (i.e., love, anger, sorrow, frustration, acceptance, etc.) Communicate this feeling without using words.

3. Choose one of the communication ideas in this section and put it into your own words.

4. With a partner, role play an interview with a prospective new participant for your mainstreaming program. The participant may or may not have a disability. You may or may not accept them into the program.

Learning Log

Remember that diary you kept as a child? Have you ever kept a log on a trip or vacation? Such diaries or logs serve two purposes: helping the writer organize his or her thoughts and feelings at periodic intervals during an experience and providing a tool for reflecting back over an experience in order to learn from that experience for the future.

Keeping a log of learnings is helpful as you journey through your experience as staff in a mainstreaming program. This log will help you to capture the learnings you have about people, activities, the organization and program, children, special children and yourself. It should not be limited to just a record of activities, but include ideas, feelings, anecdotes, etc.

Once a week log you feelings, learnings and small or large successes of participants:

Week No. 1

I learned that _____

Week No. 2

I learned that _____

Week No. 3

I learned that _____

Week No. 4

I learned that _____

Week No. 5

I learned that _____

Week No. 6

I learned that _____

Week No. 7

I learned that _____

Week No. 8

I learned that _____

End of Program

Go back through your learnings log and select the three *most important learnings*.

I learned that _____

I learned that _____

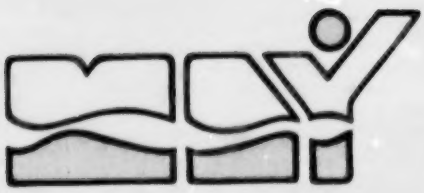
I learned that _____

Select the three areas in which you feel the *most need to improve*.

I need to improve _____

I need to improve _____

I need to improve _____



This is one of three manuals prepared to assist with the implementation of the mainstreaming concept. The authors recommend that you use all three manuals as resources as you work toward your goal of integrating persons with disabilities into your regular programs. The manuals are:

MAINSTREAMING: PERSONAL VALUES (Book No. 1)
MAINSTREAMING: A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A PROGRAM (Book No.2)
MAINSTREAMING: YOUR PERSONAL GUIDE (Book No. 3)

Materials may be ordered from

Project MAY
P. O. Box 1781
Longview, Washington 98632

Purchase price for the set of the three manuals is:

$5.50 payable to Project MAY

The opinions expressed in each manual do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the United States Office of Education or those of the agencies represented, and no official endorsement is inferred.

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